

# An Unidentifiable Publisher Service

*Timothy Olonade, director of CAPRO Media, a publisher of over 100 titles, located in Jos, Nigeria, talks about one of the strategies his organization has adopted for 20 special titles.*

**T**ell us about the difficulties of publishing evangelistic materials for Muslims.

Take the other day. My printer, on the other end of the phone, sounded exasperated. "To be honest with you, we may not be able to continue with this production," he said. No reason. If I wanted to know why he was threatening to stop printing one of our books, I had to go to his print shop.

When I got there, one look at the faces of his production staff told me something was wrong.

No, it was not equipment or anything to do with the production process. The problem was fear. My printer was alarmed. He had just discovered that the CAPRO Media books he was to print had no publisher's name and address and no ISBN. To make it worse, the material was prepared for "an audience" which could "pounce" on him and his print shop. He had printed dozens of books for CAPRO Media before, but this one contained "provocative material" directed at the Islamic community. My printer goes to church but his commitment to Christian publishing has not grown to the point where he is willing to risk all his business on "this CAPRO material." I tried, but I could not calm his fears. No address or ISBN ... ?

That's right. You see, he was printing one of our Unidentifiable Publisher Service (UPS) titles. These are books we publish with no ISBN number and no publisher's address. CAPRO Media has about 20 such titles in circulation but you cannot trace them to us. Our UPS

titles are published for outreach, not profit. We pump funds into them from our other publications. They have short print runs—2000 to 5,000 copies—and appear in a number of local languages. We publish using the UPS style because we seek to save souls in a volatile and often anti-Christian environment. If even printers are afraid to produce this material, how do you distribute it?

Distribution of UPS materials is tricky and risky. We have to be careful and creative. We discreetly litter paths in villages with the booklets so people can pick them up. We leave materials on busses and public places so that people can find them. The UPS program is driven by our passion to reach northern Nigeria. Christian publishing is easier and more lucrative in the Christian south, but CAPRO Media's burden for over 25 years has been the north. Nigeria has been in the news because of the riots after the implementation of Muslim law. How has this affected you?

The Sharia legal system recently introduced into some parts of the North forced us to temporarily close two of our mission stations, but we will keep preaching and publishing. Agitation for Islamic law is rife in those core Islamic fundamentalist states within the 10/40 window in Nigeria. They presently pose the most intense resistance to the gospel. At the slightest provocation, their Muslim youth bursts into violence. It is here that our UPS titles are most strategic.

Fundamentalist Islamic clerics in the

North believe that anything that comes with the approval of Allah must be in Arabic. All Islamic education in the north is in Aljami—the local Hausa language in Arabic script. We must publish in Aljami. This is not easy. Not many Christians know this script, but our ministry in the 10/40 window hinges on our ability to communicate and publish in this language. Will the Muslim north ever be reached?

Working within this territory and publishing for the Muslims will be difficult for a long time to come. Still, a little push from the church might just be what is needed to birth a people movement. We want to see God's Kingdom in northern Nigeria. ❖